

FADE IN:

1. EXT. SUBURBAN NEIGHBOURHOOD - NIGHT - 2004

A beat up Hyundai accent is parked on the curb by a GREEN HOUSE.

HYUNDAI ACCENT

An Arab couple in supermarket uniforms play Bop it. ALI (30s, anxious) is slow with the hits. TINA (30s, hothead) is on a hotstreak.

BOP IT
Winner. New high score.

Ali sighs and opens the glovebox. 2 ski masks, 4 revolvers and a huge roll of cash. He takes out a \$100 note and hands it to Tina.

ALI
(in Arabic)
I counted it. There's enough now
for us to stop right?

Tina gives him no thought & lights a cigarette. **They continue in Arabic wherever italicized.**

ALI
*I think this is it. We're not gonna
catch another break like this. We
should really get out while--*

Tina SHUTS the glovebox.

TINA
Shut up!

Ali looks at her. She adjusts the REAR-VIEW MIRROR.

ALI
*I'm serious Tina, enough's enough.
If someone, anyone, finds out what
we've been up to it's going to be
the end for us. For our family.*

Tina makes a finger gun and "shoots" Ali.

TINA
*As long as blood runs in my veins
I'll keep doing whatever I want to.
With or without you.*

WHITE HEADLIGHTS beam out a CRUISING CAR till it dazzles the REAR VIEW MIRROR completely white...

ECG FLATLINE. Then... A normal reading. The white line pulses into: The Caduceus. A revolver. Buffalo city skyline. Title "BYPASS".

2. INT./EXT. BASRAWI HOUSE - PRESENT DAY

SUPER: 1. 'THE BEST IS YET TO COME'

The same green house. Crown Victoria in the driveway. We hear Abdulhaleem Hafez's song, Awel Mara.

LIVING ROOM

A medium-sized but spacious area. Pictures of a four member Arab family over the years. We see the music coming from the tv, a black and white Egyptian movie, 'The Empty Pillow'

A hand sets a glass of red tea by an old man (55). YAHYA BASRAWI (large square glasses, thick mustache) stares with dead eyes at the TV from his recliner while puffing on a shisha pipe.

KAREEM

Here you go uncle.

KAREEM BASRAWI (23, Arab, youthful-looking) sits on an chair in the corner, his usual spot. Eyes on the TV and no one else. Soft-spoken, hesitant, biology genius. A gentle soul, the kind that apologizes if you punch him in the face.

A hench guy (30) in a Bills jersey does cross legged push-ups. RAMI BASRAWI. Receding hairline. IQ of a brick.

On the couch, SANDRA BASRAWI fixes her makeup (30). Attention seeker. Next to her, MONA AZIZ (50) uses prayer beads. The softspoken matriarch of the household.

Sandra grabs the remote and changes the channel.

SANDRA

Guys, guys guys! It's starting!

ONSCREEN

Original copy of the US constituion...

NARRATOR

Fidelity.

An FBI agent in SWAT gear grabs a rifle...

NARRATOR

Bravery.

A mobster is being handcuffed...

NARRATOR
Integrity.

The J. Edgar Hoover building...

NARRATOR
These are only some of the
qualities an agent possesses in
danger and uncertainty.

Sandra stands infront of a busy office...

SANDRA
Greetings America. Our mission has
and always will be to protect the
American people and uphold the
constitution of the United States.
Think you have what it takes? To
learn more, please visit fbi dot
gov.

Sandra gives a forced grin and a thumbs up.

BACK TO SCENE

Mona claps and proudly kisses Sandra.

SANDRA
Thank you, thank you all kindly. I
take cash, cheques, even amex.

RAMI
Hello America. What in the shit was
that cringefest?

SANDRA
Piss off man, go shoot hoops with
little league.

MONA
Respect yourself Rami!

RAMI
If things don't work out you've got
a promising career doing in-flight
ads to Benin.

SANDRA
(fake coughs)
Budget coach Carter.... what'd you
think Kemo?

All eyes turn to Kareem. He's caught offguard.

KAREEM
Yeah... err it was... it was good.

Rami covertly flips the bird to Kareem.

Kareem gently nods it off. PING. Checks his phone. A whatsapp group message onscreen: RESULTS COMING OUT AT 2. EVERYONE MUST ATTEND... EVERYONE!

3. INT. POST OFFICE - LOCKERROOM - DAY

Kareem carries a box packed with old medical textbooks and office supplies out the door to the...

4. EXT. - POST OFFICE'S ALLEYWAY - CONTINUOUS

A couple of employees have lunch by the back door on their break. BRIAN (20s, Black) munches on a sandwich while DIEGO (20s, Hispanic) freestyle raps.

Kareem's gently nods as he walks past them.

BRIAN

Yo-yo-yo Kareem wait up! It's ya last day today right? We bouta hook you up B... Ever heard of Lil Big?

KAREEM

I'm sorry who's--

DIEGO

Most up and coming player in the rap game bruh.

DIEGO holds his phone out to Kareem: Lil Big's instagram. 4 followers. Posts of Lil Slug flaunting with cash and guns.

BRIAN

Big came up in Diego's hood. Same schools--bodegas, crack houses, you name it.

DIEGO

Bet. If we was busting moves I was building stacks.

BRIAN

Now it's all our turn to hit a lick. This a real moneymaking opportunity. Five Gs...each.

DIEGO

Ain't cap bruh.

KAREEM

I'm not--

BRIAN

Big didn't show for his trial. Now he a wanted fugitive or some shit.
(MORE)

BRIAN (CONT'D)

Feds finna grab this fool if he leave the crib... so, he linked homeboy and said he needed a new plug, keep business running. We scoping some gear out later man -- nothing too hot. Could use an extra set of hands.

DIEGO

What you saying... you in?

Beat. Kareem builds up some courage.

KAREEM

I don't know how to say this but...
guys don't take it the wrong way...
I don't want to get involved with
criminals.

Very long Beat. Brian & Diego stare Kareem down like prey... then share a look with each other. GUFFAW. Kareem seems a little more at ease.

BRIAN

Hey we was just messing with you.
Last day prank and all. It's all
good K. He thought we was serious.

Brian goes in for a hug but PUNCHES Kareem in the face & pins him against the wall. The box EMPTIES on the ground. Diego pulls out a stun gun and cackles it inches from Kareem's neck as he struggles against Brian's pin.

KAREEM

Oh my God. I'm sorry--I'm so sorry.
I didn't mean it. Please.

BRIAN

What we was just saying, you ain't
hear none of that shit from us!
UNDERSTAND!

Kareem nods like a bobblehead.

KAREEM

Yeah--yeah--absolutely--you got it.
I'm sorry. Please just let me go.

BRIAN

I mean it you little punk ass
bitch! No weight, no slug, no
fucking nothing! Don't even fucking
think of running your weak fruit
loop ass to no cops.

Brian flings him to the ground and STEPS on an anatomy textbook. Kareem catches his breath.

BRIAN
 Ain't getting involved with
 criminals... You best watch where
 you stepping out here in these
 streets... mark!

Brian & Diego head back inside. Kareem faintly touches his
 LEFT CHEEK. Slightly agitated by the pain.

5. INT. LECTURE HALL - EVENING

Pop music and CHAOTIC CHEERING. 40 medical students in
 cosplay party up front with red cups, ping-pong balls and
 fast food. The BLACKBOARD reads: Goodbye class of '22, it's
 been a ride.

Kareem enters and greets one of the students, they don't
 respond. He stands by the corner, idle.

The music cuts. A burly man (26) in a tight Eeyore onesie
 jumps atop the desk and taps the mic. MIKE FLETCHER. If
 medical school had jocks, this'd be him.

MIKE
 Alright alright alright, you smart
 motherfuckers. Everybody having a
 good time.
 (they cheer)
 Well, it's about to get a whole lot
 more crazy y'all.

He gestures to someone at the back and the projector turns
 on. The slide reads 'STEP 2CK SCORES'. We see a table with
 names and scores. Kareem's name is right on top with a score
 of 300.

Crowd murmurs. Mike looks over the stunned faces.

MIKE
 Yikes, that bad huh?

He turns and looks at the projector, then realizes why
 everyone's quiet.

MIKE
 Oh.

Very long beat. The whole room turns to Kareem who hides his
 face and tries to leave.

KAREEM
 Err, thanks guys, I'm gonna leave
 now.

MIKE
 Wait!

Mike hops off and brings a bottle of beer with a tight grip.

MIKE

Let me get this straight. You've been with us for 4 years, kept your mouth shut the whole time and you finish with a perfect score in STEP 2.

Kareem stays silent.

MIKE

And you're coming up here in your crappy Tyler Durden costume like it's the shit.

Before Kareem can say anything Mike spills the bottle on Kareem's head. Some students throw their cups and food at him.

MIKE

Fuck you man. You suck.

6. EXT. BUS STOP - NIGHT

A few passengers are waiting for the bus. Kareem leans against the stand's glass, hair mop-wet, tries to register the day's events. PING. Whatsapp message reads: YOU'VE BEEN REMOVED FROM THIS GROUP.

HARROWING SCREAM

All the passengers turn to something. A crowd is gathering across the sidewalk.

PEDESTRIAN (O.C)

CALL NINE ONE ONE!

Kareem shoves past the distraught Buffalonians to...

A suited man (42) in severe anaphylactic shock. His eyes SWOLLEN, face red. limbs quivering and short of breath.

PEDESTRIAN 2 is giving CPR to the beat of 'staying alive'...

PEDESTRIAN 2

Music loud and women warm I've been kicked around since I was born. And now--

KAREEM

Stop! Don't do that!

PEDESTRIAN 2

(arrogantly)

I did an udemy course on cpr. Back away.

KAREEM

That's not a heart attack, he's in anaphylaxis. You're gonna kill him.

Pedestrian 2 steps back with open arms and Kareem takes over. Confidence sparks in him.

KAREEM

(to trench coat figure)

Sir! I'm a med student. Sir can you hear me? Do you have an epi-pen?

He pats the man's pockets, nothing. He scans over the bewildered faces. Spots a DELIVERY MAN holding a cardboard box.

KAREEM

You've gotta have a box cutter right?

Delivery man hands him a box cutter from his pocket.

KAREEM

Okay, now I need a straw.

A RUNNER with a sports bottle eagerly removes her straw. Offers it -

KAREEM

No-no-no. You can't use that, it's not sterile.

(beat; thinks)

Does anyone have any alcohol?

An elderly lady rummages through her purse and hands Kareem a 50cl bottle of whisky.

Kareem snatches the whisky. SPLASHES it over the cutter, straw, and his hands -- **improv disinfectant**.

With expert precision, Kareem hyperextends the figure's neck. Palpates & stabilises the thyroid cartilage with his left hand. Makes a VERTICAL INCISION with his right hand over the skin on the cricothyroid membrane. Some of the GROWING CROWD shy away while others film with their phones.

Kareem palpates the cricothyroid membrane -- blunt dissects with FINGERS. Ignores the GUSHING BLOOD. Makes a horizontal incision in the membrane. Rotates the cutter 90°. Inserts the STRAW parallel to the blade & into the trachea.

The STRAW slowly moves up and down as the FIGURE breathes shallowly. The CROWD cheers and applauds. Kareem breathes in relief.

Sound of ambulance SIRENS.

7. EXT. POOR NEIGHBOURHOOD - EVENING

Lowscale area. Houses with boarded up window. A BLACKED OUT VAN branded CHILLI'S PIZZA with a phone number is parked on the curb.

8. INT. BUNGALOW - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Moss blossoms on the ceiling. Brian & Diego count cash on a dilapidated couch. Diego sets the bills on the coffee table besides BRICKS OF COCAINE.

A tatted lanky man (40s, white) in a durag badly feigns intimidation from a recliner. This is Plug.

PLUG

Alright y'all we're good.

A red-dot BLINKS from a COOKIE MONSTER POSTER on the wall.

9. INT. SURVEILLANCE VAN - CONTINUOUS

Sandra enthusiastically observes the living room on a SCREEN with a HEADSET.

INTERCUT

Brian looks at the cash and tries his luck, fire in his eyes.

BRIAN

Yo I ain't ever see you up in this hood. Where you from B?

PLUG

Ah, y'know man... down over by Emerson.

BRIAN

Oh right Emerson... What color was uncle September's house then?

Plug's startled. His foot starts to quiver. Brian notices it.

PLUG

Nah can't remember, it was a long long time ago. But err, never moved this much weight before yo. Who you flipping these bricks to man? If you tell me I'll score a discount. Bulk buy, you feel me.

BRIAN

(points to the wall)
The hell's that?

Plug turns back. Brian TOSSES THE CASH to Diego.

CONNECT

HEY!

Plug darts up. Brian pulls and aims a GOLD UZI with a dragon etch at him.

Sandra watches them argue for a moment--keeps cool--thinks. Hits a BUTTON on the control board. Grabs a gas mask & riot gun from the WEAPONS RACK.

BRIAN

Wassup now! Fake markass bitch! Sit your old ass down!

Plug sits. Eyes desperately glued to the poster.

DIEGO

B, what the fuck man--

BRIAN

SHUT THE FUCK UP I GOT THIS!

Brian cocks the slide.

BRIAN

Change of plans spook. Me and my boy here finna take this lick and bounce.

PLUG

Don't think you should do that yo.

BRIAN

If you got a problem I got a bullet.

Brian digs the barrel into plug's temple.

BRIAN

Bang.

BEEPS of intermittent SOUND emit from the poster. Morse code for G-A-S. Brian & Diego look around -- puzzled.

DIEGO

Yo where's that coming from?

BRIAN

Fuck going on here sketch? You snitchin'? Huh! You some kinda fed.

Brian slowly pulls the trigger till -

CRASH. A cannister smashes through the window-- WHITE GAS spreads through the room. Everyone coughs and cries -- Brian fires disoriented SHOTS as Plug SPRINTS OUT THE ROOM. They grab the cash and weed.